

How Long 'Til It's Gone?

Time it takes for debris to decompose in the environment:

Glass bottle	1 million years
Monofilament fishing line	600 years
Plastic beverage bottles	450 years
Disposable diapers	450 years
Aluminum can	80-200 years
Foamed plastic buoy	80 years
Rubber boot sole	50-80 years
Foamed plastic cup	50 years
Tin can	50 years
Leather	50 years
Nylon fabric	30-40 years
Plastic film canister	20-30 years
Plastic bag	10-20 years
Cigarette filter	1-5 years
Wool sock	1-5 years
Plywood	1-3 years
Waxed milk carton	3 months
Apple core	2 months
Newspaper	6 weeks
Orange or banana peel	2-5 weeks
Paper towel	2-4 weeks

Sources: U.S. National Park Service; Mote Marine Lab, Sarasota, FL and "Garbage In, Garbage Out," Audubon magazine, Sept/Oct 1999